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## Improving Teacher Quality: the EU agenda

This note summarises the priorities for improving Teacher Education that were defined by Ministers of Education in the Council Conclusions of November 2007<sup>1</sup>, 2008<sup>2</sup> and 2009<sup>3</sup>; please refer to these texts for complete information.

### 1. Promote professional values and attitudes in the teaching profession

- promote a culture of reflective practice <sup>(07)</sup>
- teachers to be autonomous learners <sup>(07)</sup>
- teachers to engage in research, <sup>(07)</sup> develop new knowledge <sup>(07)</sup> innovate <sup>(07)</sup>
- teachers to take part in school development <sup>(07)</sup>
- teachers to collaborate with colleagues, parents etc <sup>(07)</sup>
- Member States to substantially increase teachers' learning mobility so that it becomes the norm, not the exception <sup>(08)(09)</sup>

### 2. Improve teacher competencies

- teachers to have specialist knowledge of subjects <sup>(07)</sup>, plus
- the necessary pedagogical skills <sup>(07)</sup> e.g.:
  - teach heterogeneous classes <sup>(07)</sup>
  - use ICT <sup>(07)</sup>
  - teach transversal competences <sup>(07)</sup>
  - create safe attractive schools <sup>(07)</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on improving the quality of teacher education (Official Journal C 300, 12.12.2007).

<sup>2</sup> Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on preparing young people for the 21st century: an agenda for European cooperation on schools (OJ 2008/C 319/08)

<sup>3</sup> Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders (OJ 2009/C 302/04)

### **3. Make recruitment and selection more effective, to promote quality education**

- Member States to attract and retain the best candidates for teaching profession<sup>(09)</sup>
- Member States to review their teacher recruitment, placement, retention and mobility policies; <sup>(08)</sup>
- Member States to promote teaching as an attractive career <sup>(07)</sup>/ profession <sup>(08)</sup>.

### **4. Improve the quality of Initial Teacher Education (ITE)**

- a HE qualification is required for a teaching career <sup>(07)</sup>; Member States to consider raising the level of qualifications required to be teacher <sup>(07)</sup>
- ITE qualifications should balance research-based studies and teaching practice; <sup>(07)</sup>
- Member States to consider raising the degree of practical experience required to qualify as teacher <sup>(07)</sup>
- Member States to substantially increase teachers' learning mobility so that it becomes the norm, not the exception <sup>(08)(09)</sup>

### **5. Introduce Induction programmes for all new teachers**

- Provide professional and personal support ('induction') for all beginning teachers, during their first years in the profession <sup>(09)(08)</sup>

### **6. Provide mentoring support to all teachers**

- make available mentoring support throughout the career <sup>(07)</sup>,
- provide teachers with enough support to be effective <sup>(09)</sup>

### **7. Improve the quality and quantity of teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

- teachers to undertake regular reviews of their individual development needs (via self- or external –evaluation) <sup>(07) (09)</sup>
- Quality assurance systems for CPD
- Improve supply /variety of CPD: including formal, informal and non-formal learning; including exchanges and placements; <sup>(07)</sup>
- Increase the take-up of CPD <sup>(07)</sup>

## **8. School Leadership**

- Improve recruitment to leadership posts (08)
- Improve training and development of school leaders:
  - teaching skills, teaching experience (07); (08)
  - management, leadership skills (07), (08);
  - provide high quality training provision (09).
- Lighten school leaders' administrative load so that they focus their attention on improving the quality of teaching and learning in their schools (09)

## **9. Ensure the quality of Teacher Educators (Teacher Trainers):**

- solid practical teaching experience (09)
- good teaching competences (09)
- high academic standard. (09)

## **10. Improve Teacher Education Systems**

- Initial Teacher Education, Induction and CPD should be organised as a continuum: coordinated and coherent (07)
- Teacher Education systems to be adequately resourced and quality assured (07)
- Teacher Education courses should respond to evolving needs (07) and provide innovative responses to new demands (07)
- foster partnerships between Teacher Education Institutions and schools (07)
- develop schools as 'learning communities' (07)
- provide adequate opportunities for teachers to meet their professional development needs (09).